

From: [Kratochvil, Bob](#)
Subject: Important LMC Updates
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Colleagues:

I hope this message finds each of you and your families healthy and safe. As we quickly approach the end of Summer and the beginning of Fall semester, I wanted to provide you with some important updates and items of interest. All of you have been working incredibly hard throughout the summer: continuing to serve our students via remote operations; preparing for the Fall; and developing strategies and offering resources to improve our working and learning environment. Much time and effort in the last two months has been dedicated to a number of critical areas, including actions to address systemic inequality and racism, return-to-work planning, enrollment and budget, the new Brentwood Center, our Educational Master Plan, and accreditation. Much of this work is ongoing and requires more from us as a College – and one of these key priorities is our institutional commitment to anti-racism.

Fighting Systemic Racism & Inequality

In his 2017 farewell address, President Obama issued a call to action to the country. He noted that the United States is exceptional, not because it has been “flawless from the start,” but because we “have shown the capacity to change and make life better for those who follow.” He acknowledged that change does not come easily or happen swiftly. “Yes, our progress has been uneven,” he continued. “For every two steps forward, it often feels we take one step back. But the long sweep of America has been defined by forward motion, a constant widening of our founding creed to embrace all and not just some.”

We are still striving for, but struggling to achieve, progress on a number of fronts in this country – particularly when it comes to equality and justice for Black, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC), and for marginalized, minoritized, and historically-underrepresented groups. At Los Medanos College, we are committed to strengthening a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, and racial justice. However, we recognize that our own efforts to provide education, opportunity, respect, safety, and success for all have not been flawless. Although many members of our College community have engaged in important equity-focused work, we have much more to do as an institution – namely around anti-racism and social justice. We have a tremendous capacity for change, a collective vision to make a positive difference in the lives of our students, and a commitment to “embrace all and not just some,” all of which will serve us well in this endeavor. LMC strives to provide an equitable learning and working environment for all, and to realize that goal we must stand against racism. We must work to root out and strike down systemic racism and white supremacy. We must demonstrate our commitment to learn, listen, and act in order to achieve that goal – not just on paper, but in practice.

One of our recent institutional actions demonstrating that commitment was joining the [USC Race and Equity Center’s California Community College Equity Leadership Alliance](#). This new consortium has been designed as a “sustainable, multi-dimensional effort that addresses long-standing racial equity issues and campus racial climate problems.” In June, 20 members of our College community – including classified professional and faculty leaders identified by their respective Senates, along with our President’s Cabinet team – participated in an initial session entitled “Leading Productive Conversations about Racism.” Even in the face of fiscal challenges and uncertainty resulting from the economic impact of the global pandemic, we are committing financial resources to this work as an institutional priority. As a member institution, LMC will be able to utilize the resources and tools offered by the Alliance, including:

- **Participation in monthly “eConvening” professional learning experiences**, with each focused on a particular aspect of racial equity. Among the tentative topics are: Fostering and

Sustaining Inclusive Classrooms for Students of Color; Accountability and Incentives for Advancing Racial Equity; Confronting Explicit Acts of Racism and Racial Violence on Campus; Creating Equitable Pathways to Leadership Roles for Employees of Color; Disaggregating Data to Identify Racial Inequities; Eliminating Racial Disproportionality in Student Transfer Rates; Hiring and Retaining Faculty of Color; Meaningfully Integrating Race Across the Curriculum; Recruiting and Strategically Diversifying Staff at All Levels; and Using Survey Data to Improve Campus Racial Climate.

- **Access to a virtual equity resource portal**, an online repository of resources and tools (e.g. equity-related rubrics, readings, case studies, videos, conversation scripts, etc.).
- **Administration of three campus climate surveys:** the Center’s National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC) for students; and two additional surveys – one for personnel at all levels, the other for all faculty – designed using the NACCC as a guide.

In addition, we have taken steps to incorporate anti-racism objectives and language into our 2020-25 Educational Master Plan, which is still in development, and to align it with the [California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office \(CCCCO\) “Call to Action” strategies](#). Efforts are also well underway to develop an online resources site to support and strengthen our efforts to fight racism and injustice – as individuals and as a College community. This new website is expected to launch shortly. And, plans are in the works for a “town hall” College Assembly on racial justice – jointly hosted by the Senates and President’s Office – to be held in the Fall. LMC was also selected to participate in *Caring Campus*, an initiative of the Institute for Evidence-Based Change that engages classified professionals in developing behavioral commitments to proactively support and interact with students. *Caring Campus* supports institutional equity efforts by fostering an environment where all students – including those who have been historically marginalized or underserved – feel cared for and connected.

LMC’s focus on students, sense of community, commitment to equity and inclusion, and collaborative spirit will support our efforts to stand together against racism. It may not be an easy process, and some changes will take longer than others, but this work is critical and necessary to fully achieve our mission. And, along the way, we must make the effort and take the time to really listen to one another, truly see one another, authentically engage with one another, and respect one another.

Return-to-Work Planning

As a College and District, we are doing everything we can to ensure the health and safety of our employees and students during the COVID-19 health emergency. With leadership from the District Office, in concert with key personnel at LMC, a great deal of work is underway to prepare for Fall semester. The majority of instruction and support services in the Fall term will continue to be provided remotely. To be clear, there is no specific date that has been set for all employees to return to work on campus. Some LMC employees, however, will return to campus this Fall to teach hybrid classes, provide limited in-person support services, and fulfill other essential duties that cannot be conducted in a remote fashion. Those who may be asked to be on campus will do so only as necessary to meet the needs of students, but within State and County health guidelines. Over the past several weeks, various District personnel have been developing procedures and protocols, in an effort to safeguard the health and safety of students and employees. These guidelines will include, among other aspects: social distancing, face coverings, training, self-screening, facilities preparations and signage, and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting. A District-wide email from Chancellor Huff is expected shortly, and it will include detailed information about these procedures and protocols.

Enrollment & Budget

As you know, Governor Newsom signed into law California’s 2020-21 budget on June 30. The resulting fiscal plan for the year is in some respects much better than the Governor’s Spring

proposal, which included significant budget reductions. However, the budget dealt with those necessary revenue shortfalls by implementing “deferrals” that essentially delay payments into future years. For our District, this means that no reductions to our general apportionment or categorical funding will occur this year. In fact, it maintained the 3% salary schedule increases negotiated last year. But, these deferrals (our District’s projected proportionate share of which is \$25 million), will impact our budget in the coming years. In addition, with the expectation that operations will remain mostly remote in the Fall, some areas that support themselves through sales – such as the bookstores and parking services – face significant revenue challenges and will need District financial support. Recognizing the fiscal difficulties on the horizon, and to ensure consistencies among the sites, Chancellor Huff outlined several key strategies to our financial planning approach for the coming year in his July 8th District-wide email:

- **Our enrollment strategy will be strongly focused on productivity, which is the basis by which we are funded, using an overall productivity ratio goal (FTES/FTEF) of 17.5.** Because we are in a “hold harmless” funding situation, our revenue amount is effectively fixed *regardless* of the level of FTES attained. Furthermore, there is no growth money available, even if we could exceed our funded targets. Achieving this goal will be even more challenging, since we know that some of our courses will need to be delivered this Fall in a way that greatly reduces productivity compared to prior years. Degree/certificate core and capstone offerings, labs and classes requiring in-person meetings, social distancing guidelines, smaller class sizes, split labs, etc. will all drive down productivity, but will be necessary steps if students are allowed to gradually return to our campuses and take the courses they want and need.
- **The hiring of hourly employees will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by Business Services at each college using established criteria.** If forwarded, those hourly requests will be reviewed by District Office Human Resources personnel, who will consult with the respective Business Services office on any potential concerns and to validate the criteria are met.
- **Vacant, permanent positions will continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis at each site.** The recruitment of these positions at the colleges must be justified as operationally critical or otherwise necessary, and will be reviewed and approved through the respective President’s Office and by the Chancellor’s Office. Many positions will remain on pause, however, as the District evaluates the financial picture over a multi-year period.

Brentwood Center

The long-anticipated new Brentwood Center is close to completion! Construction work has concluded over the Summer, “punch list” items are now being given attention, and the process of moving from the Sand Creek Road location to the new Center is underway. Consistent with the “return-to-work” information outlined above, there is no scheduled opening date for in-person services and instruction at the new Brentwood Center. However, just as at the Pittsburg Campus, the Brentwood Center team will be prepared to open the new site at such time that all District, County, and State public health guidelines are met. It may seem like an inauspicious beginning to a momentous occasion, but the Brentwood Center is destined to be an educational gem for East Contra Costa County for generations to come.

Educational Master Plan

You will recall that we spent much of the last academic year developing a new Educational Master Plan (EMP) that is intended to serve as a roadmap for the College in the next five years. At the end of the Spring term, the Planning Committee and the EMP Core Group reached tentative agreement on four goals and corresponding objectives. Since then – with the nationwide movement for racial justice, and the call to action from CCCCCO and across our campuses – it was clear that we could not move forward on a plan for LMC’s future without including specific language and actions that demonstrate our commitment to anti-racism. At my direction, an additional EMP goal and objectives have been drafted to address systemic racism and align with the CCCCCO “Call to Action”

strategies. These include activities such as: reviewing our policies, operations, and outcomes to identify and eliminate biases; prioritizing practices and allocating resources to address institutional inequities and achievement gaps for BIPOC, minoritized/marginalized, and disproportionately-impacted groups; and developing action plans that implement equity-focused, anti-racist, and inclusive procedures. The College community will have an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the new EMP goal and the other four goals in the Fall.

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Accreditation

As a reminder, our comprehensive Peer Review Team will be conducting its virtual visit October 5-8. The [Institutional Self-Evaluation Report \(ISER\)](#) was endorsed by our three Senates and the Shared Governance Council in May, and was then approved by our Governing Board at its June meeting. Now that ACCJC has identified our Visit Team members, it is likely that they will begin reviewing our website and additional documents. I ask again that any faculty, classified professionals, and managers who have responsibility for various LMC webpages review and update them, as necessary. We want to make sure that the information posted there is accurate, up-to-date, and showcases our incredible institution in the best possible light. As the visit date approaches, the College community will receive further details, including a recap of the intensive and inclusive institutional process that culminated with our ISER.

These updates represent only a portion of what has been occurring throughout the Summer, as a significant amount of work has been happening on a daily basis. Classified professionals, faculty, managers, and student employees have been working incredibly hard – in very different, and often difficult, circumstances and environments – all in support of our students. In a few weeks, we will hold our All-College Meeting to kick off another semester that will be filled with teaching, learning, and serving students. Opening Day will be a “virtual” gathering, but my hope is to retain our annual traditions, such as providing institutional updates, recognizing our colleagues for their years of service to the College and District, welcoming the newest permanent members of the LMC family, and connecting with one another (even if only via Zoom). In the meantime, I thank you for all that you do – particularly for all of your tremendous efforts and collective determination over the last four months.

Please be safe and stay well. I look forward to “seeing” you at Opening Day on August 21.

Bob

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bcc: LMC All Employees